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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLGB #0755 2341602
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 221602Z AUG 07
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4538
INFO RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 0118
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 0933
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1674
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0260
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0949
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0298

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 000755

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/11/2017

TAGS: PREL PGOV PHUM RW

SUBJECT: KIVUS STRATEGY DEMARCHE: RWANDA IN AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 115007

Classified By: Ambassador Michael R. Arietti, reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) On August 21, Ambassador delivered reftel demarche on the USG Kivus strategy to Minister of Foreign Affairs Charles Murigande. Ambassador asked that the GOR: 1) reiterate its previously declared opposition to any form of recruitment within Rwanda by General Nkunda and work to prevent such recruiting; 2) continue to publicize its open invitation to FDLR (Democratic Force for the Liberation of Rwanda) cadres to peacefully repatriate; 3) encourage Nkunda to exercise restraint and work toward acceptable solutions in the Kivus; 4) set as early a date as possible for a meeting between Murigande and his Congolese counterpart; and 5) continue discussions with its Congolese counterparts on restoration of diplomatic relations and return of refugees.

¶2. (C) Murigande reaffirmed his government's commitment to a peaceful and collaborative solution to the problems in the Kivus. He agreed that any form of recruitment of refugees was not helpful and not acceptable, noting that the GOR as recently as July had briefed the diplomatic corps and issued a press statement recording its efforts to prevent recruitment from refugee camps. He reaffirmed Rwandan opposition to any recruiting, and promised further helpful statements. He noted that the GOR had recently held several meetings with MONUC's Radio Okapi on the subject of encouraging FDLR members to return to Rwanda. In these meetings, the GOR advocated repeated broadcasts of interviews with Rwandan officials, particularly those such as General Rwarakabijie who had escaped from the FDLR and been reintegrated into Rwandan society. It was essential, he said, to send a regular and consistent message to listeners throughout the Kivus on the willingness of the GOR to receive FDLR members. On the subject of encouraging Nkunda to exercise restraint, he said that the GOR had to be careful not to be seen as privately advising Nkunda without the knowledge of the Congolese government; "we ask permission to contact him" he said. However, he also stated that the GOR had certainly urged Nkunda in the past to cooperate with the Congolese government (for example during the informal negotiating sessions the GOR hosted for Nkunda and the Congolese military last January). Finally, he noted that tentative dates of September 3/4 had been set for his meeting with the Congolese foreign minister; Murigande now awaited confirmation from the Congolese.

ARIETTI